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Identical letters dated 13 March 2018 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I should like to inform you that the Syrian Arab Republic objects to the Arria formula meeting that the Security Council convened on 12 March 2018 at the request of the delegations of France, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and Poland. The theme of the meeting was "Implementing Syria's Cessation of Hostilities: Syria's Opposition Speaks". Following are the reasons for our objection:

- The United Nations is governmental organization, not a theatre for staging displays that distort the identity of the Organization. Accordingly, holding a meeting without consulting the affected Government is a grave violation of the Charter of the United Nations, international law and Security Council resolutions, all of which reaffirm the need to respect the principle of the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of States and the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of States.

- Giving terrorist groups, including the so-called White Helmets, the opportunity to use the Security Council as a platform is a blatant violation of Council resolutions, in particular those that concern counter-terrorism. While the States that established and continue to fund this terrorist entity may try to whitewash its record, they will never change the fact that the members of the White Helmets are terrorists who primarily belong to the Nusrah Front organization, which the Security Council has designated a terrorist entity.

- The fact that the Governments of France and the United Kingdom, which have been supporting, whether directly or indirectly, terrorist groups in Syria, were the lead organizers of the meeting demonstrates that its purpose was to exploit the Security Council as a platform for mounting a campaign of lies against the Syrian Government and thus provide the terrorist groups with political and media protection to complement the military and logistical support that they receive from those two Governments, as well as certain other well-known Governments.

- If the Security Council truly wishes to learn what is going on in Syria, then it must invite some returning foreign terrorist fighters who are United Kingdom and French nationals to a public hearing of the Council, not an Arria formula hearing, so that they can explain how the Governments and intelligence agencies

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of those two States helped to recruit, train and arm them and then sent them to Syria in order to massacre the Syrian people.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic reiterates that it is imperative to respect the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations and the working methods of the Security Council. The Council must not be used a platform to mount a campaign of misinformation against the Syrian Government, and thereby defame it. Moreover, the Council must pay no heed to fabricated and false information that comes from untrustworthy sources, such as the so-called Violations Documentation Centre in Syria and the Syrian American Medical Society. It should rely only on documented information provided by the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic.

I should be grateful if the present letter could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Bashar **Ja'afari**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative